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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4989
INFO RUCNARF/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHDT/AMEMBASSY DILI IMMEDIATE 0106
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE 0961
RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA IMMEDIATE 1130
RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE IMMEDIATE 2655
RUEHBA/AMCONSUL PERTH IMMEDIATE 1388
RUEHJA/AMCONSUL SURABAYA IMMEDIATE 0246
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY IMMEDIATE 0560
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0336
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 0657
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 1778

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/08/2016
TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [AORC](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [AS](#) [PO](#) [TT](#)
SUBJECT: EAST TIMOR: UPDATE ON AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE AND
FEDERAL POLICE SECURITY ISSUES

REF: A. CANBERRA 842

[1](#)B. LISBON 1074

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Classified By: Acting POLCOUNS Tamara Fitzgerald, for reasons 1.4 (b) a
nd (d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C/NF) The GOA confirmed that the Australian Defence Force (ADF) could include U.S. Embassy in Dili in its patrolling arrangements and could mount a rapid reaction capability to respond to a security threat at the U.S. Embassy, if needed. The GOA planned to double the number of police currently deployed to Dili to about 200 in the near future, and hoped to see an eventual expansion of the multinational police force to 500 personnel. A senior defense contact provided examples of uncoordinated activities of the Portuguese Republican National Guard (GNR) in Dili that continued to put security of Australian and other Joint Task Force (JTF) personnel at risk, but told us late on June 8 that Portugal was belatedly beginning to acknowledge the problem. End Summary.

ADF Security Capabilities for U.S. Embassy Dili

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) East Timor Director Brett Hackett told us on June 8 that, following review of JTF capabilities, the GOA had determined that the ADF could incorporate the U.S. Embassy in Dili into existing ADF patrolling arrangements. The GOA also determined that there was sufficient ADF capacity to provide a rapid reaction response to a security threat at the U.S. Embassy, if the need arose. Hackett said, however, that JTF mission needs meant that the ADF would not be able to provide a static security force at the U.S. or other embassies.

PLANS TO AUGMENT AUSTRALIAN POLICE FORCE

13. (SBU) Hackett said the Australian Federal Police (AFP) planned to increase the number of its police personnel in Dili from the current level of 106 to 130 by Saturday, June 19. It planned to deploy temporarily an additional 70 personnel soon thereafter, bringing the total up to 200 AFP personnel. Because of the strain on AFP resources, caused by deployments to the Solomon Islands and elsewhere, the GOA planned to rotate the final contingent of 70 AFP back to Australia as soon as they could be replaced with Australian state and territory police. Queensland had already volunteered a small police force, he added.

14. (C/NF) Hackett said that some in GOA had estimated the manpower requirement for a multinational police force in East Timor to be about 500 personnel, but that would depend on the shape of the new UN mission. There was some musing within the GOA about widening the number of countries that might provide police forces, possibly to include Singapore, Japan and the Philippines. No decision or action would be undertaken on composition of the police force, however, until there was a new UN mandate, he said.

CONTINUING COORDINATION PROBLEMS WITH PORTUGAL...

15. (C/NF) Separately, and further to Ref A, Col. Mike Kelly (please protect), head of the East Timor Task Force, Australian Department of Defence (ADOD), provided additional examples of behavior by Portuguese National Republic Guard (GNR) forces in Dili that demonstrated its willingness to risk serious incidents with JTF forces and its continued lack of interest in coordinating their activities with the JTF. Kelly said GNR continued to enter other JTF countries' designated sectors without advance notice, firing random warning shots in a counterproductive and risky manner. On

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the night of June 7, he related, a GNR unit had tried to locate an East Timor magistrate to process some East Timorese it had apprehended in the New Zealand sector. The GNR had entered the sector and detained the persons without coordinating their activities with New Zealand forces. When the GNR unit was unable to find a magistrate, it brought the detainees to the Australians for disposition, without advance notification and without coordinating movements or processing, as the GNR had earlier promised to do. The Australians refused to accept the detainees without documentation.

...BUT PORTUGAL NOW BEGINNING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PROBLEM

16. (C/NF) In a follow-on conversation late on June 8, however, Col Kelly indicated that the incident outlined above had led the Portuguese to spend several hours on June 8 discussing command and control issues with the Australians in Dili. While no final resolution was reached, per Col. Kelly, the Portuguese now were beginning to acknowledge the need for coordination. Col. Kelly believed the GNR had now agreed to be assigned responsibility for the Comora area of Dili until the command and control issues were resolved. Kelly surmised that the issue would not be finally resolved until the United Nations took over control of policing, which might not occur for several months.

VISIT BY PM HOWARD?

17. (C) Contrary to some news reports that speculated that PM Howard might visit East Timor, Hackett told us that DFAT was unaware of any planned visit by the Prime Minister.

STANTON